

THE HIGHER SACRIFICE

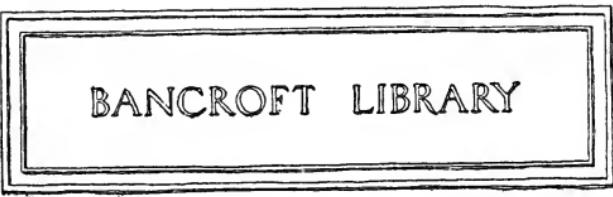
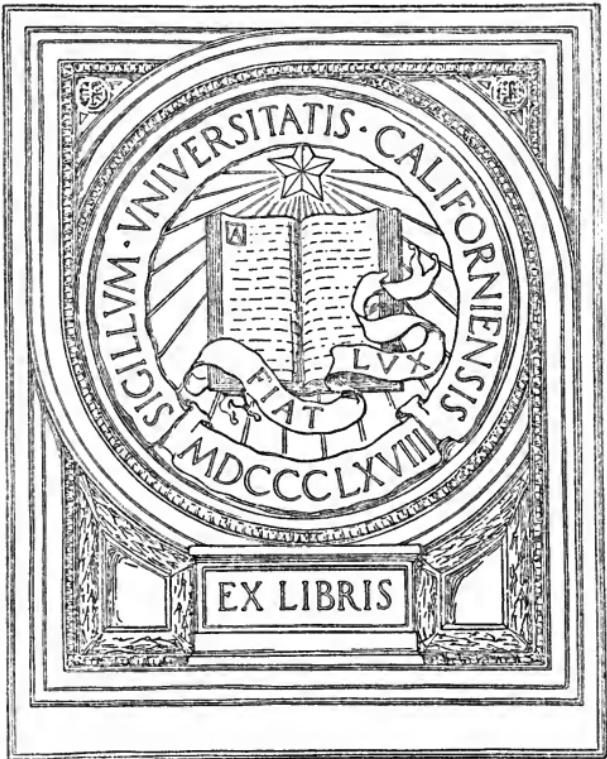
DAVID STARR JORDAN

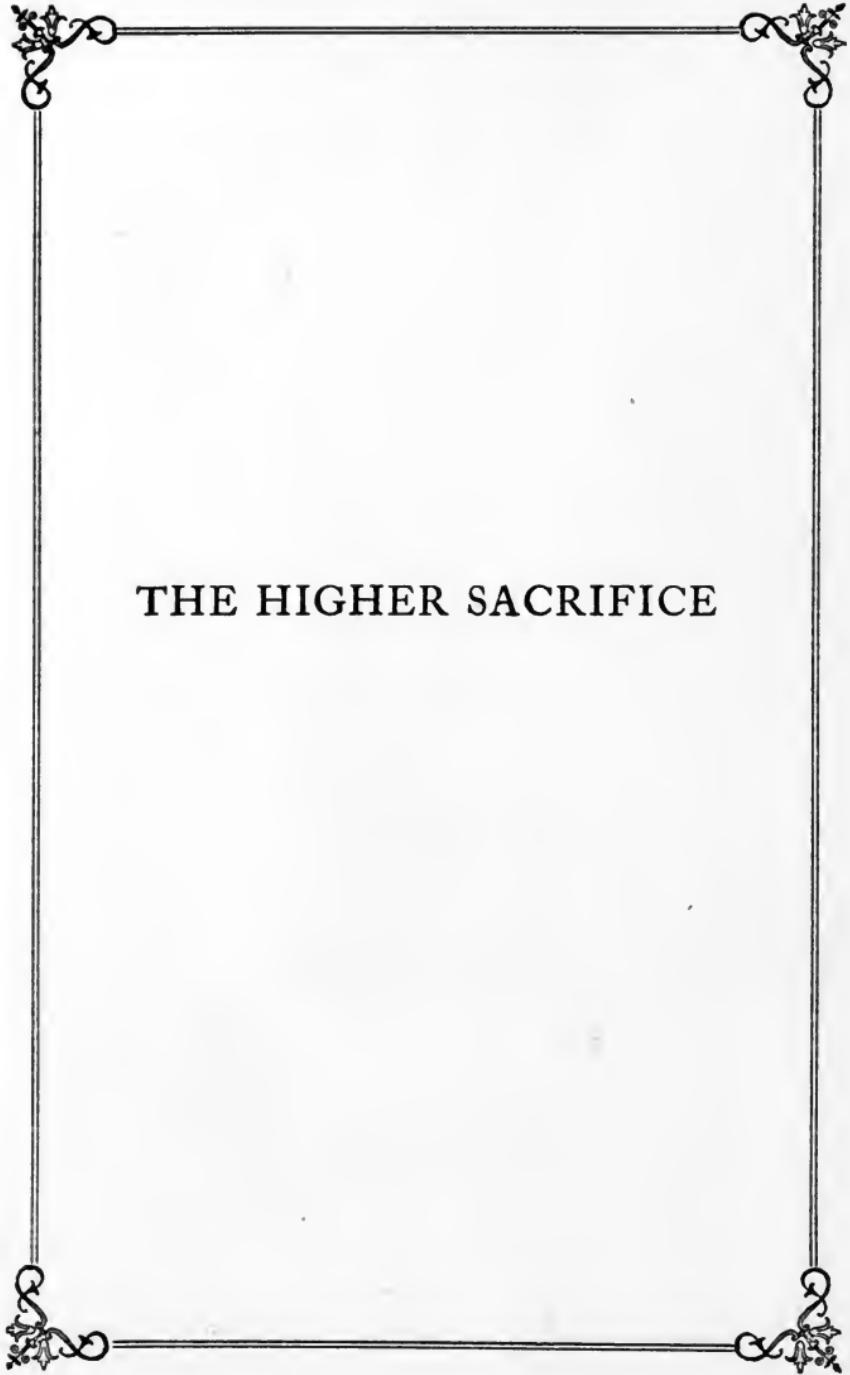












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BY

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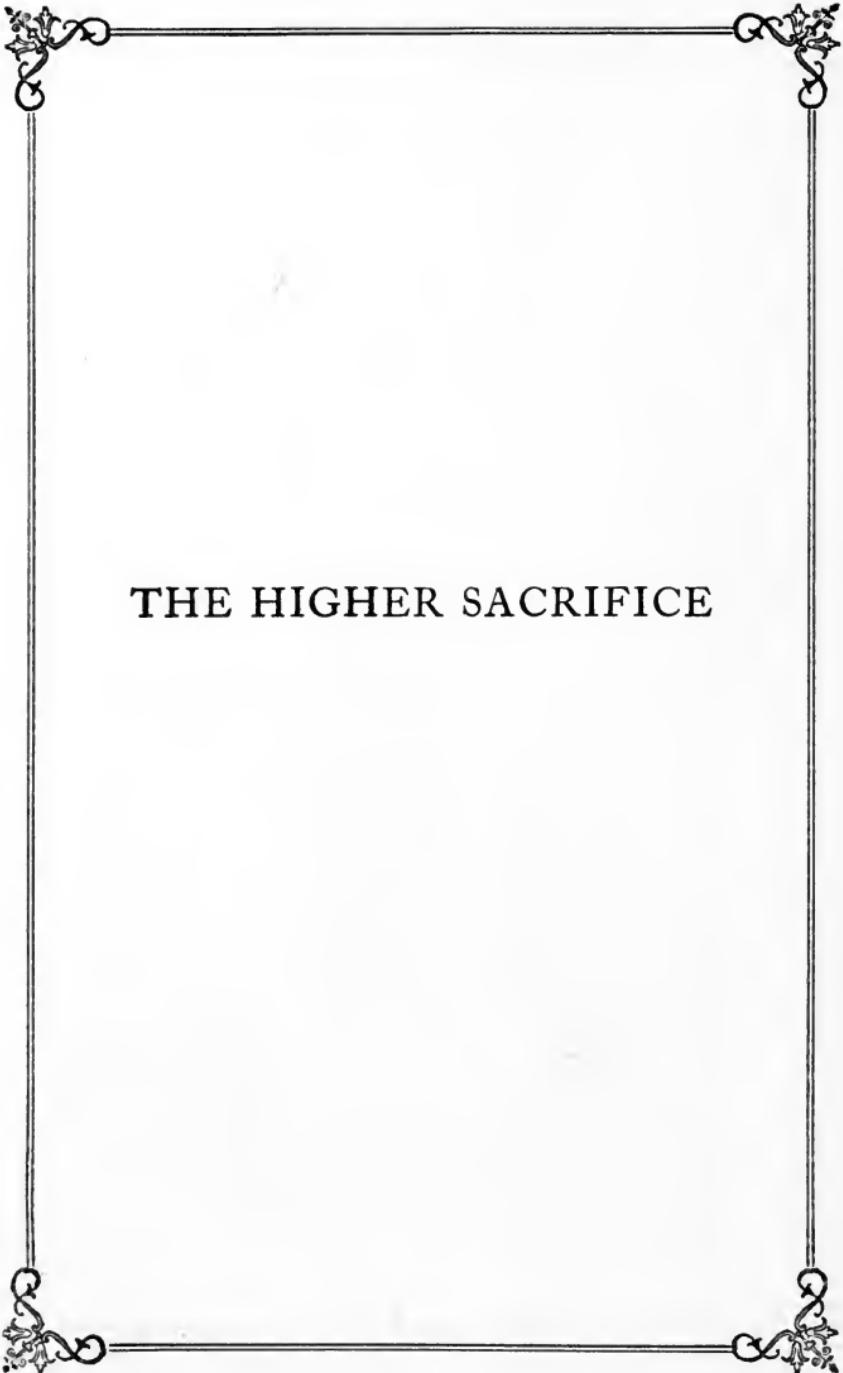
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WISDOM too great to be translated into action is a contradiction of words.

For wisdom is only knowing what one ought to do next. Virtue is doing it. Virtue and enjoyment have never been far apart from each other. To know and to do is the basis of the highest service. Those the world has the right to honor are those who have found enough to do. The fields are always white to their harvest.



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ACH man that lives is, in part, a slave, because he is a living being. This belongs to the definition of life itself. Each creature must bend its back to the lash of its environment. We imagine life without conditions — life free from the pressure of insensate things outside us or within. But such life is the dream of the philosopher. We have never known it. The records of the life we know are full of concessions to such pressure.

The vegetative part of life, that

part which finds its expression in physical growth, and sustenance, and death, must always be slavery. The old primal hunger of the protoplasm rules over it all. Each of the myriad cells or centres of energy of which man is made must be fed and cared for. The perennial hunger of these cells he must stifle. This hunger began when life began. It will cease only when life ceases. It will last till the water of the sea is drained, the great lights are put out, and the useless earth is hung up empty in the archives of the universe.

This old hunger the individual

man must each day meet and satisfy. He must do this for himself; else, in the long run, it will not be done. If others help feed him, he must feed others in return. This return is not charity nor sacrifice; it is simply exchange of work. It is the division of labor in servitude. Directly or indirectly, each must pay his debt of life. There are a few, as the world goes, who in luxury or pauperism have this debt paid for them by others. But there are not many of these fugitive slaves. The number will never be great; for the lineage of idleness is never long nor strong. A student

once asked an Australian professor why the judgments of the Lord were visited to the third and fourth generation — not to the seventh or eighth. This was his answer: “ Because there is no seventh or eighth generation in the lineage of evil. It never goes beyond the fourth.” It is only the strong, the clean, the wise which count in survival.

When this debt of life is paid, the slave becomes the man. Nature counts as men only those who are free. Freedom springs from within. No outside power can give it. Board and lodging on the earth once paid,

a man's resources are his own. These he can give or hold. By the fullness of these is he measured. All acquisitions of man, Emerson tells us, "are victories of the good brain and brave heart ; the world belongs to the energetic, belongs to the wise. It is in vain to make a paradise but for good men."

In the ancient lore of the Hebrews, so Rabbi Voorsanger tells us, it is written, "Serve the Lord, not as slaves hoping for reward, but as gods who will take no reward." The meaning of the old saying is this : *Only the gods can serve.*

Those who have nothing have nothing to give. He who serves as a slave serves himself only. That he hopes for a reward shows that to himself his service is really given. To serve the Lord, according to another old saying, is to help one's fellow-men. The Eternal asks not of mortals that they assist Him with His earth. The tough old world has been His for centuries of centuries before it came to be ours, and we can neither make it nor mar it. We were not consulted when its foundations were laid in the deep. The waves and the storms, the sunshine and the song of

birds need not our aid. They will take care of themselves. Life is the only material that is plastic in our hand. Only man can be helped by man.

When they hung John Brown in Virginia, many said, you remember, that in resisting the Government he had thrown away his life, and would gain nothing for it. He could not, as Thoreau said at the time, get a vote of thanks or a pair of boots for his life. "He could not get four-and-sixpence a day for being hung, take the year around." But he was not asking for a vote of thanks. It was not

for the four-and-sixpence a day that he stood between brute force and its victims. It was to show men the nature of slavery. It was to help his fellow-citizens to read the story of their institutions in the light of history. " You can get more," Thoreau went on to say, " in your market (at Concord) for a quart of milk than you can for a quart of blood ; but yours is not the market heroes carry their blood to." The blood of heroes is not sold by the quart. The great, strong, noble, and pure of this world, those who have made our race worthy to be called men, have not been paid

by the day or by the quart ; not by riches, nor fame, nor power, nor anything that man can give. Out of the fullness of their lives have they served the Lord. Out of the wealth of their resources have they helped their fellowmen.

The great man cannot be a self-seeker. The greatness of a Napoleon or of an Alexander is the greatness of gluttony. It is slavery on a grand scale. What men have done for their own glory or aggrandizement has left no permanent impress. “ I have carried out nothing,” says the warrior, Sigurd Slembe. “ I have not

sown the least grain nor laid one stone upon another to witness that I have lived.” Napoleon could have said as much, if, like Sigurd, he had stood “upon his own grave and heard the great bell ring.” The tragedy of the Isle of St. Helena lay not in the failure of effort, the collapse of empire, but in the futility of the aim to which effort was directed. There was no tragedy of the Isle of Patmos. The scenes at Harper’s Ferry will not be recorded in final history as tragedy.

What such men as Napoleon have torn down remains torn down. All

this would soon have fallen of itself; for that which has life in it cannot be destroyed by force. But what such men have built has fallen when their hands have ceased to hold it up. The names history cherishes are those of men of another type. Only "a man too simply great to scheme for his proper self" is great enough to become a pillar of the ages.

It is a part of the duty of higher education to build up ideals of noble freedom. It is not mainly for help in the vegetative work of life that you go to college. You are just as good a slave without it. You can earn your

board and lodging without the formality of culture. The training of the college will make your power for action greater, no doubt; but it will also magnify your needs. The debt of life a scholar has to pay is greater than that paid by the clown. And the higher sacrifice the scholar may be called upon to make grows with the increased fullness of his life. Greater needs go with greater power, and both mean greater opportunity for sacrifice.

In the days you have been with us you should have formed some ideals. You should have bound these

ideals together with the chain of "well-spent yesterdays," the higher heredity which comes not from your ancestors, but which each man must build up for himself. You should have done something in the direction of the life of higher sacrifice, the life that from the fullness of its resources can have something to give.

Such sacrifice is not waste, but service; not spending, but accomplishing. Many men, and more women, spend their lives for others when others would have been better served if they had spared themselves.

Mere giving is not service. “Charity that is irrational and impulsive giving, is a waste, whether of money or of life.” “Charity creates half the misery she believes; she cannot relieve half the misery she creates.”

The men you meet as you leave these halls will not understand your ideals. They will not know that your life is not bound up in the present, but has something to ask or to give for the future. Till they understand you they will not yield you their sympathies. They may jeer at you because the whip they respond to leaves no mark upon you. They will

try to buy you, because the Devil has always bid high for the lives of young men with ideals. A man in his market stands always above par. Slaves are his stock in trade. If a man of power can be had for base purposes, he can be sure of an immediate reward. You can sell your blood for its weight in milk, or for its weight in gold — whatever you choose,—if you are willing to put it up for sale. You can sell your will for the kingdoms of the earth; and you will see, or seem to see, many of your associates making just such bargains. But in this be not deceived.

No young man worthy of anything else ever sold himself to the Devil. These are dummy sales. The Devil puts his own up at auction in hope of catching others. If you fall into his hands, you had not far to fall. You were already ripe for his clutches.

When a man steps forth from the college, he is tested once for all. It takes but a year or two to prove his mettle. In the college high ideals prevail, and the intellectual life is taken as a matter of course. In the world outside it appears otherwise, though the conditions of success are in fact just the same. It is not true,

though it seems so, that the common life is a game of “grasping and griping, with a whine for mercy at the end of it.” It is your own fault if you find it so. It is not true that the whole of man is occupied with the effort “to live just asking but to live, to live just begging but to be.” The world of thought and the world of action are one in nature. In both truth and love are strength, and folly and selfishness are weakness. There is no confusion of right and wrong in the mind of the Fates. It is only in our poor bewildered slave intellects that evil passes for power. All

about us in the press of life are real men, "whose fame is not bought nor sold at the stroke of a politician's pen." Such are the men in whose guidance the currents of history flow. The work of the world is not accomplished anonymously. It is the work of living men, each true to the best light of his generation. The masses of men — "men with guano in their composition" — do not make history. It goes on in spite of them. Its events pass over their heads.

The lesson of values in life it should be yours to teach, because it should be yours to know and to act.

Men are better than they seem, and the hidden virtues of life appear when men have learned how to translate them into action. Men grasp and hoard material things because in their poverty of soul they know of nothing else to do. It is lack of training and lack of imagination, rather than total depravity, which gives our social life its sordid aspect. When a plant has learned the secret of flowers and fruit, it no longer goes on adding meaningless leaf on leaf. And as "flowers are only colored leaves, fruits only ripe ones," so are the virtues only perfected and ripened

forms of those impulses which undirected may show themselves as vices.

It is your relation to the overflow of power that determines the manner of man you are. Slave or god, it is for you to choose. Slave or god, it is for you to will. It is for such choice that will is developed. Say what we may about the limitations of the life of man, they are largely self-limitations. Hemmed in is human life by the force of the Fates ; but the will of man is one of the Fates, and can take its place by the side of the rest of them. The man who can will

is a factor in the universe. Only the man who can will can serve the Lord at all, and by the same token, hoping for no reward.

Likewise is love a factor in the universe. Power is not strength of body or mind alone. One who is poor in all else may be rich in sympathy and responsiveness. "They also serve who only stand and wait."

In the magazine, *The Dial*, Mr. W. P. Reeves tells us the tale, half humorous, half allegorical, of the decadence of a scholar. According to this story, one Thomson was a college graduate, full of high notions

of the significance of life and the duties and privileges of the scholar. With these ideals he went to Germany, that he might strengthen them and use them for the benefit of his fellow-men. He spent some years in Germany, filling his mind with all that German philosophy could give. Then he came home, to turn his philosophy into action. To do this, he sought a college professorship.

This he found it was not easy to secure. Nobody cared for him or his message. The authority of "wise and sober Germany" was not recog-

nized in the institutions of America, and he found that college professorships were no longer "plums to be picked" by whosoever should ask for them. The reverence the German professor commands is unknown in America. In Germany, the authority of the wise men is supreme. Their words, when they speak, are heard with reverence and attention. In America, wisdom is not wisdom till the common man has examined it and pronounced it to be such. The conclusions of the scholar are revised by the daily newspaper. The readers of these

papers care little for messages from Utopia.

No college opened its doors to Thomson, and he saw with dismay that the life before him was one of discomfort and insignificance, his ideals having no exchangeable value in luxuries or comforts. Meanwhile, Thomson's early associates seemed to get on somehow. The world wanted their cheap achievements though it did not care for him.

Among the associates was one Wilcox, who became a politician, and, though small in abilities and poor in virtues, his influence among

men seemed unbounded. The young woman who had felt an interest in Thomson's development, and to whom he had read his rejected verses and his uncalled-for philosophy, had joined herself to the Philistines, and yielded to their influence. She had become Wilcox's wife. His friends regarded Thomson's failure as a joke. He must not take himself too seriously, they said. A man should be in touch with his times. "Even Philistia," one said, "has its æsthetic ritual and pageantry." A wise man will not despise this ritual, because Philistinism, after all, is the life of the world.

But Thomson still held out. "I pledged my word in Germany," he said, "to teach nothing that I did not believe to be true. I must live up to this pledge." And so he sought for positions, and he failed to find them. Finally, he had a message from a friend that a professorship in a certain institution was vacant. This message said, "Cultivate Wilcox." So, in despair, Thomson began to cultivate Wilcox. He began to feel that Wilcox was a type of the world, a bad world, for which he was not responsible. The world's servant he must be, if he received his

wages. When he secured the coveted appointment, through the political pull of Wilcox and the mild kindness of Mrs. Wilcox, he was ready to teach whatever was wanted of him, whether it was truth in Germany or not. He found that he could change his notions of truth. The Wilcox idea was that everything in America is all right just as it is. To this he found it easy to respond. His salary helped him to do so. And at last, the record says, he became "*laudator temporis acti*," one who praises the times that are. The times that are

to be demand a higher, virile type of manliness.

So runs the allegory. As a matter of fact the story is not true—for no university in America nor anywhere else asks a man to teach what is not true. The outside temptation to fall short of one's best is not great with the scholar. It is the impulse of weakness inside against which we must guard. When you pass from the world of thought you will find yourself in the world of action. The conditions are not changed, but they seem to be changed. How shall you respond to the seeming difference?

Shall you give up the truth of high thinking for the appearance of speedy success? If you do this, it will not be because you are worldly-wise, but because you do not know the world. In your ignorance of your own worth you may sell yourself cheaply.

One must know life before he can know truth. He who will be a leader of men must first have the power to lead himself. The world is selfish and unsympathetic. But it is also sagacious. It rejects as worthless him who suffers decadence when he comes in contact with its vulgar cleverness. The natural man can

look the world in the face. The true man will teach truth wherever he is,—not because he has pledged himself in Germany not to teach anything else, but because in teaching truth he is teaching himself. His life thus becomes genuine, and, sooner or later, the world will respond to genuineness in action. The world knows the value of genuineness, and it yields to that force wherever it is felt. “The world is all gates,” says Emerson, “all opportunities, strings of tension waiting to be struck.”

Thus, in the decadence of Thom-

son, it was not the times nor the world nor America that was at fault ; it was Thomson himself. He had in him no life of his own. His character, like his microscope, "was made in Germany," and bore not his mark, but the stamp of the German factory. Truth was not made in Germany ; and to know or to teach truth there must be a life behind it. The decadence of Thomson was the appearance of the real Thomson from under the axioms and formulæ his teachers had given him.

Men do not fail because they are human. They are not human

enough. Failure comes from lack of life. Only the man who has formed opinions of his own can have the courage of his convictions. Learning alone does not make a man strong. Strength in life will show itself in happiness, will show itself in sympathy, in sacrifice. "Great men," says Emerson, "feel that they are so by renouncing their selfishness and falling back on what is humane. They beat with the pulse and breathe with the lungs of nations."

It is not enough to know truth ; one must know men. It is not enough to know men ; one must be

a man. Only he who can live truth can know it. Only he who can live truth can teach it. “He could talk men over,” says Carlyle of Mirabeau, “he could talk men over because he could act men over. At bottom that was it.”

And at bottom this is the source of all power and service. Not what a man knows, or what he can say; but what is he? what can he do? Not what he can do for his board and lodging, as the slave who is “hired for life”; but what can he do out of the fullness of his resources, the fullness of his helpfulness, the

fullness of himself? The work the world will not let die was never paid for—not in fame, not in money, not in power.

We hear much to-day of the decadence of literature, and we heard more ten years ago, before the breath of “the Strenuous Life blew away the fad of the Drooping Spirit.” But this decadence, whatever it may be, is not due to the decadence of man. It is not the effect of the nerve-strain of over-wrought generations born too late in the dusk of the ages. Its nature is this—that uncritical and untrained men have come into a

heritage they have not earned. They will pay money to have their feeble fancy tickled. The decadence of literature is the struggle of mountebanks to catch the public eye. There is money in the preparation of the “endless dirges to decay,” else the “sad-eyed fakirs” would be busy with something else. Such as these have “verily their reward.” But these performances are not a man’s work. They have no relation to literature, or art, or human life. These are not in decadence because their imitations are sold on street-corners or tossed into our laps on railway

trains. As well say that gold is in its decadence because brass can be burnished to look like it ; or that the sun is in his dotage because we have filled our gardens with Chinese lanterns.

“ No ray is dimmed, no atom worn,
My oldest force is good as new,
And the fresh rose on yonder thorn
Gives back the bending heavens in dew.”

Real literature has never been paid for. It has never asked the gold nor the plaudits of the multitude. Job, and Hamlet, and Faust, and Lear, were never written to fill the pages of a Sunday newspaper. John Milton and John Bunyan were not

publishers' hacks; nor were John Hampden, John Bright, or Samuel Adams, or for that matter Abraham Lincoln or Theodore Roosevelt, under pay as walking-delegates of reform.

No man was hired to find out that the world was round, or that men and lower animals have a common origin, that living organisms fill the fading leaf, or that valleys are worn down by water, or that the stars are suns. No man was paid to burn at the stake or die on the cross that other men might be free to live. The sane, strong, brave, heroic souls

of all ages were the men who, in the natural order of things, have lived above all considerations of pay or glory. They have served not as slaves hoping for reward, but as gods who would take no reward. Men could not reward Shakespeare, or Darwin, or Newton, or Helmholtz for their services any more than we could pay the Lord for the use of His sunshine. From the same inexhaustible divine reservoir it all comes — the service of the great man and the sunshine of God.

“ Twice have I moulded an image,
And thrice outstretched my hand ;

Made one of day and one of night,
And one of the salt sea strand;
One in a Judean manger,
And one by Avon's stream;
One over against the mouths of Nile,
And one in the Academe."

And in such image are men made every day, not only in Bethlehem or in Stratford, not alone on the banks of the Nile or the Arno; but on the Mississippi, or the Columbia, or the San Francisquito, it may be, as well. All over the earth, in this image, are the sane and the sound and the true. And when and where their lives are spent arise generations of others like them, men in the true

order. Not alone men in the “image of God,” but “gods in the likeness of men.”

It is to the training of the genuine man that the universities of the world are devoted. They call for the higher sacrifice, the sacrifice of those who have powers not needed in the common struggle of life, and who have, therefore, something over and beyond this struggle to give to their fellows. Large or small, whatever the gift may be, the world needs it all, and to every good gift the world will respond a thousand-fold. Strength begets strength, and wis-

dom leads to wisdom. "There is always room for the man of force, and he makes room for many." It is the strong, wise, and good of the past who have made our lives possible. It is the great human men, the "men in the natural order," that have made it possible for "the plain, common men" that make up civilization to live, rather than merely to vegetate.

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We hear those among us sometimes who complain of the shortness of life, the smallness of truth, the limited stage on which man is forced to act. But the men who thus

complain are not men who have filled this little stage with their action. The man who has learned to serve the Lord never complains that his Master does not give him enough to do. The man who helps his fellow-men does not stand about with idle hands to find men worthy of his assistance. He who leads a worthy life never vexes himself with the question as to whether life is worth living.

We know that all our powers are products of the needs and duties of our ancestors. Wisdom too great to be translated into action is a contra-

diction of words. For wisdom is only knowing what one ought to do next. Virtue is doing it. Virtue and enjoyment have never been far apart from each other. To know and to do is the basis of the highest service. Those the world has the right to honor are those who have found enough to do. The fields are always white to their harvest.

Alexander the Great had conquered his neighbors in Greece and Asia Minor, the only world he knew. Then he sighed for more worlds to conquer. But other worlds he knew nothing of lay all about

him. The secrets of the rocks he had never suspected ; the mystery of life was no more to him than to a jackal. Steam, electricity, the growth of trees, the marvel of human consciousness,—all these were as nothing to him. The only conquest he knew, the subjection of men's bodies, went but a little way. All the men who in his lifetime had ever even heard of Alexander the Great could find encampment on the Palo Alto farm. The great world of men in his day was beyond his knowledge. The great actual Universe of God lay about him in majestic in-

visibility. His world was a very small one, and of that he had seen but a little corner.

For the need of more worlds to conquer is not a sign of strength. It is the stamp of ignorance. It indicates that nothing worth while is yet conquered. No Lincoln ever sighed for more nations to save ; no Luther for more churches to purify ; no Darwin that nature had not more hidden secrets which he might follow to their depths ; no Agassiz that the thoughts of God were all exhausted before he was born.

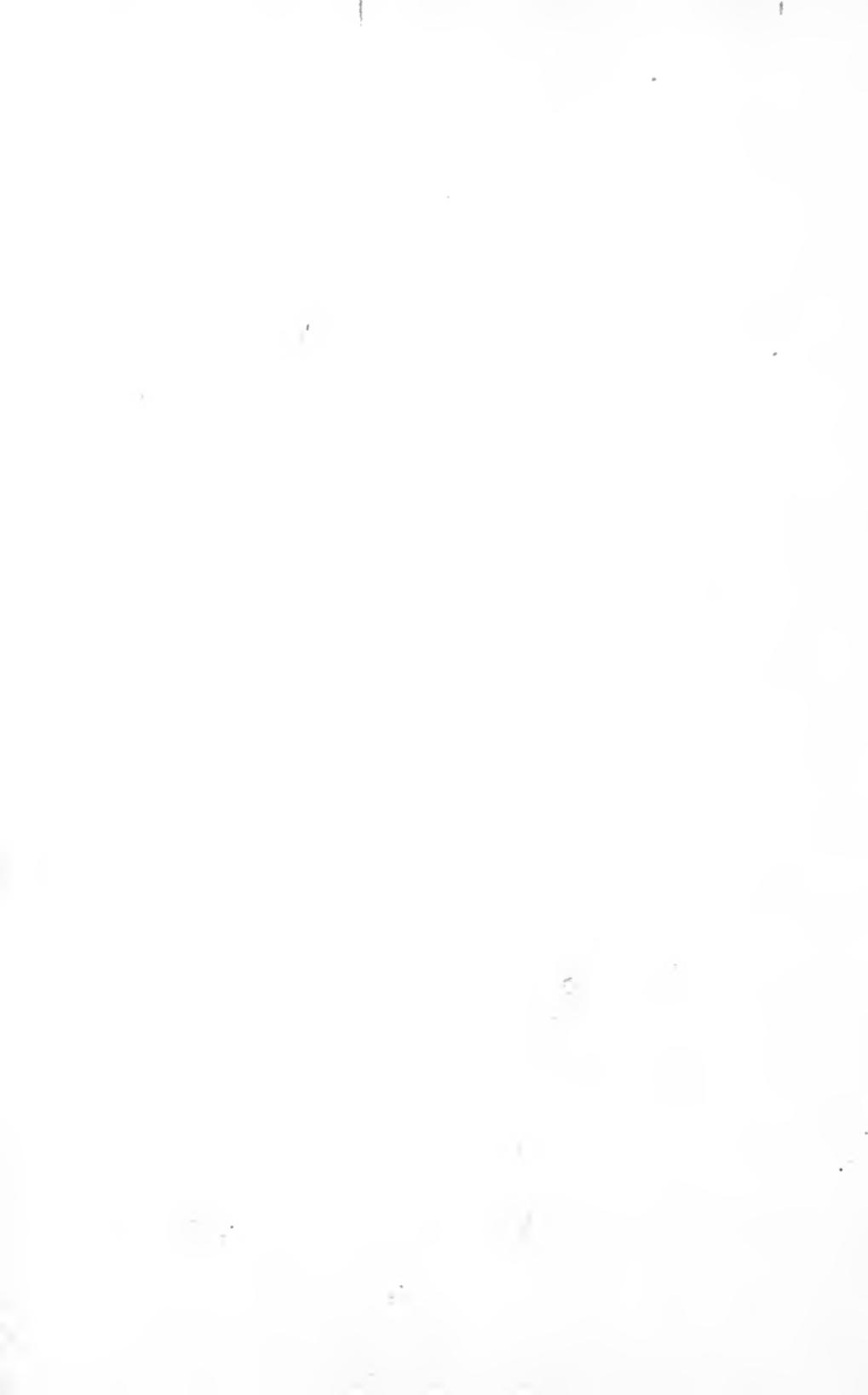
And now, a final word to you as scholars. Higher education means the higher sacrifice. That you are taught to know is simply that you may do. Knowing the truth signifies that you should do right. Knowing and doing have value only as translated into justice and love. There is no man so strong as not to need your help. There is no man so weak that you cannot make him stronger. There is none so sick that you cannot bring him to "the gate called Beautiful." There is no evil in the world that you cannot help turn to goodness. "We could lift up this

land," said Björnson of Norway, "we could lift up this land, if we lifted as one."

Therefore lift, and lift as one. You are strong enough and wise enough. You shall seek strength and wisdom, that others through you may be wiser and stronger. You shall seek your place to work as your basis for helpfulness. Others will make the place as good as you deserve. If your lives are sacrificed in helping men, it is to the market of the ages you carry your blood, not the milk-market of Concord town. The honest man will not "pledge himself in Germany to

teach nothing which is not true." Being true himself, he can teach nothing false. The more men of the true order there are in the world, the greater is the world's need of men.

As you are men, so will your places in life be secure. Every profession is calling you. Every walk of life is waiting for your effort. There will always be room for you, and each of you will make room for many.





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